

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5923

---

---

As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Government Operations & Elections, March 1, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to timelines for required comprehensive plan and development regulation updates.

**Brief Description:** Changing timelines for required comprehensive plan and development regulation updates.

**Sponsors:** Senator Kastama.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 2/24/05, 3/1/05 [DPS, DNP].

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5923 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Kastama, Chair; Berkey, Vice Chair; Fairley, Haugen, Kline, McCaslin and Pridemore.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Benton and Mulliken.

**Staff:** Genevieve Pisarski (786-7488)

**Background:** As amended in 2002, the state's Growth Management Act (GMA) establishes a seven year cycle for review and revision (update) of policies and development regulations concerning critical areas and resource lands, in the case of all cities and counties, and of comprehensive plans and development regulations, in the case of cities and counties that plan under the GMA.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Conditions under which cities and counties may omit one update cycle every fourteen years are adopted.

Cities and counties that do not plan under the GMA may omit one update cycle every fourteen years, if policies and development regulations concerning critical areas and resource lands have been updated using Best Available Science (BAS).

Cities that plan under the GMA may omit the next required update, if their population is less than 5,000 and has grown by less than 17 percent or 100 people in the ten years preceding the deadline for the update, their UGA is not proposed to be enlarged, they have updated critical areas ordinances using BAS, and they are in compliance with any applicable orders of a Growth Management Hearings Board.

Counties that plan under the GMA may omit the next required update, if their population is less than 50,000 and has grown by less than 17 percent in the ten years preceding the deadline for the update, they have updated critical areas and resource lands ordinances using BAS, and they are in compliance with any applicable orders of a Growth Management Hearings Board.

No cities or counties located within Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston counties (buildable lands counties) is eligible to omit any required update.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** To forgo one update, the population threshold for counties is raised from 20,000 to 50,000. For cities, except those in "buildable lands" counties, it is raised from 1,500 to 5,000. The title is amended to replace the words "timelines for" with the words "criteria for allowing cities and counties to partially forgo".

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Updates should not be automatic in every case; they should be tied to size and circumstances. Local governments would still have to comply with BAS, even the small highly urbanized cities. The GMA work group supported tailoring update requirements to those that make sense for the circumstances of the local government, but couldn't reach consensus on a specific proposal. There should also be some requirements for coordination among cities and counties, especially in the "buildable lands" counties. This bill provides an alternative to "opt out," which was vetoed. A small city like La Conner that is not growing and not changing could skip an update, but its county could update, if it needed to. Skipping one update results in a passage of time that is too long to appropriately address effects on species like salmon and new scientific information. An extension could be an alternative.

**Testimony Against:** This proposal misses the target. The focus should be on how growth is happening and what adjustments are needed, such as adjusting timeframes and making the process more efficient and effective. Updates in "buildable lands" counties should require timely adoption of the "reasonable measures" identified in their required reports.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Tim Trohimovich, Futurewise; Millard Deusen, WDFW; Nancy Ousley, CTED.

CON: Mike Flynn, AWR.